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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
Office Action Summary	10/568,451	CRAIGIE, JIM	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	BRYAN WRIGHT	2431	

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address* --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>03 February 2009</u>.

2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b) ☒ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) <u>1-16</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) <u>1-16</u> is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1.   This action is in response to Amendment filed 2/3/2009. Claims 1, 4, and 9-16

are amended. Claim 1-16 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2.   Claims 1-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Bandini et al. (International Publication No. WO 03/001326 (cited from IDS) and Bandini

hereinafter) and further in view of Logan et al. (US Patent Publication No.

2002/0181703 and Logan hereinafter).

3.   As to claim 1, Bandini teaches a method of applying a sender-specific mail

policy, the method comprising:

maintaining a list of computer system users and associated sender- specific mail

policies (i.e., ...teaches a policy engine [pg. 9, lines 10-15]); receiving a mail message

intended for further transmission (i.e., ... teaches receiving a mail message [204,502,

fig. 6(a)]), the mail message indicating a sender thereof [205, fig. 6(a)];

determining whether said mail message contains a digital signature (i.e., …

teaches identifying that a message includes an electronic signature (e.g., digital

signature) [pg. 20, lines 1-5]);

attempting to verify the digital signature in said mail message [fig. 8];

if the mail message does contain a verified digital signature (i.e., … teaches

determining if a message contains a signatures [pg. 20, lines 1-5]),

Bandini does not expressly teach:

and if a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the

sender indicated in the mail message, applying an associated sender-specific mail

policy to said mail message;

and if the mail message does not contain a digital signature or does not contain a

verified digital signature corresponding to the sender indicated in the mail message,

applying a default mail policy to said mail message.

However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious

modification of the system disclosed by Bandini as introduced by Logan. Logan

discloses:

and if a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the

sender indicated in the mail message (to provide the capability to verify a digital

signature subsequently thereby verifying the signature's correspondence to a user [par.

27; par. 32]), applying an associated sender-specific mail policy to said mail message

(to provide the means to apply a prescribed function (e.g., sender-specific mail policy) to the mail [par. 32]);

and if the mail message does not contain a digital signature or does not contain a verified digital signature corresponding to the sender indicated in the mail message, applying a default mail policy to said mail message (to provide a means to handled a message in a usual way (e.g., default) if an non-verifiable (e.g., unsigned) message is encountered [par. 32]).

Therefore, given the teachings of Logan, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have recognized the desirability and advantage of modifying Bandini by employing the well known feature of applying a specific policy to an email received from a user upon verification of the email's digital signature disclosed above by Logan, for which email digital signature verification will be enhanced (par. 32).

4.   As to claim 2, Bandini teaches a method where the step of applying a sender-specific mail policy to said mail message comprises determining whether the mail message complies with said policy (i.e., ... teaches message conformity check [fig. 6(a)]; if the mail message does comply with said policy, allowing transmission of said message [620, fig. 6(a)]; and if the mail message does not comply with said policy, applying appropriate measures to said message [622, fig. 6(a)].

5.   As to claim 3, Bandini teaches a method where the step of applying a default

mail policy to said mail message comprises determining whether the mail message

complies with said policy [fig. 6(a)];

if the mail message does comply with said policy, allowing transmission of said

message [620, fig. 6(a)];

and if the mail message does not comply with said policy, applying appropriate

measures to said message [622, fig. 6(a)].

6.   As to claim 4, although the system of Bandini illustrates a substantial features of

the claimed invention, Bandini does not disclose:

A method where said default mail policy is triggered by more criteria than said

sender-specific mail policy.

However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious

modification of the system disclosed by Bandini as introduced by Logan. Logan

discloses:

A method where said default mail policy is triggered by more criteria than said

sender-specific mail policy (to provide means to handle a message in a usual way (e.g.,

default) [par. 32].

Therefore, given the teachings of Logan, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the

time of the invention would have recognized the desirability and advantage of modifying

Bandini by employing the well known feature of applying a default policy disclosed

above by Logan, for which email digital signature verification will be enhanced (par. 32).

7.   As to claim 5, Bandini teaches a method where the step of applying a default

mail policy to said mail message comprises rejecting said mail message (i.e., ... teaches

a policy engine [pg. 9, lines 10-22] ... further teaches a policy applicable to return to

sender (i.e., rejecting) email [622, fig. 6(a)].

8.   As to claim 6, Bandini teaches a method comprising receiving the mail message

in a boundary agent, the mail message being intended for further transmission over an

external computer network [fig. 1].

9.   As to claim 7, Bandini teaches a computer program product, comprising code for

performing the method as claimed in claim 1 (i.e., ... teaches a program executing on a

computer [pg. 6, lines 15-20]).

10.   As to claim 8, Bandini teaches a method of applying a sender-specific mail

policy, for use in a boundary agent of a first computer network, the method comprising:

(a) maintaining a list of users of said first computer network, and sender-specific mail

policies associated with said users (i.e., ...teaches a policy engine [pg. 9, lines 10-15]);

(b) receiving from a user of said first computer network a mail message intended for

further transmission over a second computer network (i.e., ... teaches receiving a mail

message [204,502, fig. 6(a)]), the mail message indicating a sender thereof [204, fig. 6(a)];

(cl) determining whether said mail message contains a digital signature [fig. 8], and, if so (c2) attempting to verify the digital signature [fig. 8];

and (d) if the mail message does contain a verified digital signature [pg. 20, lines 1-5],

Bandini does not expressly teach:

and if a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the sender indicated in the mail message, applying an associated sender-specific mail policy to said mail message;

However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Bandini as introduced by Logan. Logan discloses:

and if a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the sender indicated in the mail message (to provide the capability to verify a digital signature subsequently thereby verifying the signature's correspondence to a user [par. 27; par. 32]), applying an associated sender-specific mail policy to said mail message (to provide the means to apply a prescribed function (e.g., sender-specific mail policy) to the mail [par. 32]);

Therefore, given the teachings of Logan, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have recognized the desirability and advantage of modifying Bandini by employing the well known feature of applying a specific policy to an email received from a user upon verification of the email's digital signature disclosed above by Logan, for which email digital signature verification will be enhanced (par. 32).

11.   As to claim 9, although the system of Bandini illustrates a substantial features of the claimed invention, Bandini does not disclose:

A method further comprising: if the outgoing mail message does not contain a digital signature or does not contain a verified digital signature corresponding to the sender indicated in the mail message, applying a default mail policy to said mail message.

However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Bandini as introduced by Logan. Logan discloses:

A method further comprising: if the mail message does not contain a digital signature or does not contain a verified digital signature corresponding to the sender indicated in the mail message, applying a default mail policy to said mail message (to provide a means to handled a message in a usual way (e.g., default) if an non-verifiable (e.g., unsigned) message is encountered [par. 32]).

Therefore, given the teachings of Logan, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the

time of the invention would have recognized the desirability and advantage of modifying

Bandini by employing the well known feature of applying a specific policy to an email

received from a user upon verification of the email's digital signature disclosed above by

Logan, for which email digital signature verification will be enhanced (par. 32).

12.   As to claim 10, Bandini teaches a local computer network, comprising: a plurality

of user computers; and a mail server (i.e., ... teaches a computer network for which

email transmittal occurs [pg. 3, lines 4-10]);

        and having a connection to a second computer network [fig. 5 [a] and [b]], such

that outgoing mail messages can be sent from the user computers to destination

computers connected to the second computer network [fig. 5 [a] and [b]], and such that

incoming mail messages can be sent to the user computers from transmitting

computers connected to the second computer network [fig. 5 [a] and [b]], where the mail

server maintains a list of users of said user computers and associated sender-specific

mail policies (i.e., ...teaches a policy engine [pg. 9, lines 10-15]);

        where, when said mail server receives an outgoing mail message [fig. 5 [a] and

[b]], said outgoing mail message indicating a sender thereof, said mail determines

whether said outgoing message contains a digital signature and if so server attempts to

verify a digital signature in said outgoing mail message [pg. 20, lines 1-5; [fig. 8]];

        and if the outgoing mail message does contain a verified digital signature [pg. 20,

lines 1-5],

Bandini does not expressly teach:

and if a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the

sender indicated in the mail message, applying an associated sender-specific mail

policy to said mail message;

However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious

modification of the system disclosed by Bandini as introduced by Logan. Logan

discloses:

and if a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the

sender indicated in the mail message (to provide the capability to verify a digital

signature subsequently thereby verifying the signature's correspondence to a user [par.

27; par. 32]), applying an associated sender-specific mail policy to said mail message

(to provide the means to apply a prescribed function (e.g., sender-specific mail policy) to

the mail [par. 32]);

Therefore, given the teachings of Logan, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the

time of the invention would have recognized the desirability and advantage of modifying

Bandini by employing the well known feature of applying a specific policy to an email

received from a user upon verification of the email's digital signature disclosed above by

Logan, for which email digital signature verification will be enhanced (par. 32).

13.   As to claim 11, although the system of Bandini illustrates a substantial features of

the claimed invention, Bandini does not disclose:

A local computer network where if the outgoing mail message does not contain a

digital signature or does not contain a verified digital signature corresponding to the

sender indicated in the mail message, applying a default mail policy to said mail

message.

However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious

modification of the system disclosed by Bandini as introduced by Logan. Logan

discloses:

A local computer network where if the mail message does not contain a digital

signature or does not contain a verified digital signature corresponding to the sender

indicated in the mail message, applying a default mail policy to said mail message (to

provide a means to handled a message in a usual way (e.g., default) if an non-verifiable

(e.g., unsigned) message is encountered [par. 32]).

Therefore, given the teachings of Logan, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the

time of the invention would have recognized the desirability and advantage of modifying

Bandini by employing the well known feature of applying a specific policy to an email

received from a user upon verification of the email's digital signature disclosed above by

Logan, for which email digital signature verification will be enhanced (par. 32).

14.   As to claim 12, Bandini teaches a local computer network where when said mail

server determines whether the outgoing mail message complies with said sender-

specific mail policy: if the outgoing mail message does comply with said sender-specific

mail policy, said mail server allows transmission of said outgoing message [fig. 6 (a)];

and if the outgoing mail message does not comply with said sender- specific mail policy,

said mail server applies appropriate measures to said outgoing message [fig. 6 (a)].

15.   As to claim 13, Bandini teaches a local computer network where when said mail

server determines whether the outgoing mail message complies with said default mail

policy: if the outgoing mail message does comply with said default policy, said mail

server allows transmission of said message; and if the outgoing mail message does not

comply with said default policy, said mail server applies appropriate measures to said

outgoing mail message [fig. 6 (a)].

16.   As to claim 14, although the system of Bandini illustrates a substantial features

of the claimed invention, Bandini does not disclose:

        A local computer network where said default mail policy is triggered by more

criteria than said sender-specific mail policy.

However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious

modification of the system disclosed by Bandini as introduced by Logan. Logan

discloses:

A local computer network where said default mail policy is triggered by more criteria than said sender-specific mail policy (to provide means to handle a message in a usual way (e.g., default) [par. 32].

Therefore, given the teachings of Logan, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have recognized the desirability and advantage of modifying Bandini by employing the well known feature of applying a default policy disclosed above by Logan, for which email digital signature verification will be enhanced (par. 32).

17.   As to claim 15, Bandini teaches a local computer network where said default mail policy is to reject said outgoing mail message (i.e., ... teaches a policy engine [pg. 9, lines 10-22] ... further teaches a policy applicable to return to sender (i.e., rejecting) email [622, fig. 6(a)].

18.   As to claim 16, Bandini teaches a computer program product, for use on a mail server in a local computer network, said local computer network further comprising: a plurality of user computers (i.e., ... teaches a computer network for which email transmittal occurs [pg. 3, lines 4-10]);

and having a connection to a second computer network [fig. 5 [a] and [b]], such that outgoing mail messages can be sent from the user computers to destination computers connected to the second computer network [fig. 5 [a] and [b]], and such that incoming mail messages can be sent to the user computers from transmitting

computers connected to the second computer network [fig. 5 [a] and [b]], where said

computer program product causes the mail server to maintain a list of users of said user

computers and associated sender- specific mail policies (i.e., ...teaches a policy engine

[pg. 9, lines 10-15]);

where, when said mail server receives an outgoing mail message [fig. 5 [a] and

[b]], said outgoing mail message indicating a sender thereof [fig. 5 [a] and [b]], said

computer program product causes said mail server to determine whether said outgoing

message contains a digital signature and if so, attempt to verify a digital signature in

said outgoing mail message (pg. 20, lines 1-5; fig. 8);

Bandini does not expressly teach:

and if a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the

sender indicated in the outgoing mail message, applying an associated sender-specific

mail policy to said outgoing mail message;

However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious

modification of the system disclosed by Bandini as introduced by Logan. Logan

discloses:

and if a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the

sender indicated in the outgoing mail message (to provide the capability to verify a

digital signature subsequently thereby verifying the signature's correspondence to a

user [par. 27; par. 32]), applying an associated sender-specific mail policy to said mail

message (to provide the means to apply a prescribed function (e.g., sender-specific

mail policy) to the mail [par. 32]);

Therefore, given the teachings of Logan, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the

time of the invention would have recognized the desirability and advantage of modifying

Bandini by employing the well known feature of applying a specific policy to an email

received from a user upon verification of the email's digital signature disclosed above by

Logan, for which email digital signature verification will be enhanced (par. 32).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments, see Applicant's Remarks, filed 2/3/2009, with respect to

the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1-16 have been fully considered and are persuasive.

Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a

new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Logan.

Response to applicant's amendment to claims 4 and 14 in view of claim objection.

Examiner withdraws claim objection for claims 4 and 14 in view of applicant's claim

amendment.

Response to applicant's arguments of deficiency:

"*Simply put, Bandini does not teach "applying an associated sender-specific mail policy to said mail message" after determining that "the mail message does contain a verified digital signature" and "a user corresponding to the verified digital signature corresponds to the sender indicated in the mail message," as required by claim t. Therefore, Bandini fails to anticipate at least claim 1".*

Examiner contends modifying Bandini with the teaching of Logan provides remedy to deficiency. Specifically, Logan teaches a digital signature to identify specific user {Logan, par. 27}. Therefore, those skilled in the art would recognize that this implies the signature and user correspondence. Next Logan describes the ability to verify the digital signature and thereby verifying its correspondence with the desired user {Logan, par. 32}. Logan next describes the process of applying a specific function (e.g., sender- specific mail policy) to the message after validating the mail signature {Logan, par. 32}.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to BRYAN WRIGHT whose telephone number is (571)270-3826. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am - 5:30 pm Monday -Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, AYAZ Sheikh can be reached on (571)272-3795. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

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you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a

USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information

system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/BRYAN WRIGHT/
Examiner, Art Unit 2431
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